

# INVESTIGATING THE TRAJECTORIES OF ACADEMIC STAFF WHO IDENTIFY AS DBER SCHOLARS

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One of the growing areas of research in Australia is the discipline-based education research (DBER) field. In 2012 a National Research Council report stated “[DBER is a] vital area of scholarship [with] potential to improve undergraduate science and engineering education” (National Research Council, 2012, p. 1), meeting recommendations given by the Chief Scientist of Australia (2014) to improve the education of STEM graduates.

The primary intent of this study was to collect the motivations, journeys and trajectories of DBER researchers and find factors that can lead to supporting the growth and retention of these scholars. Given the regional differences in academic landscapes between continents, we have chosen to focus (for now) on the Australian DBER community. Additionally, we know representation within our teaching faculty has direct and measurable impact on the students themselves. As such, we have also explored the diversity of backgrounds of those who participated alongside their perceptions of the diversity seen within the Australian DBER community.

To achieve the above aims, a series of interviews were undertaken with Australian academics who identify as being a part of the DBER community. The population represented was across a range of experience levels, from early career to senior, as well as multiple gender identities and varied academic pathways. In this presentation, the outcomes of analysing this data will be used to describe the types of academics that are becoming DBER researchers in Australia, as well as the initial motivations and pathways that have led them to this point in their careers.

## REFERENCES

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